

IN THE CLAIMS

1-59. (CANCELLED)

60. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) An automatic card shuffler comprising:

a housing having an upper surface mounted in a plane with a gaming table surface such that a card receiver for accepting a group of cards to be shuffled is [recessed beneath] accessible from the [top surface of] the gaming table surface;

the card receiver for accepting a group of cards to be shuffled;

a randomizing system for randomizing the order of an initial set of playing cards;

a collection surface for receiving randomized cards;

an elevator for raising the collection surface to an elevation ~~[[proximate the gaming table surface]~~ so that a complete set of randomized card is accessible to a dealer; and

a microprocessor for controlling the operation of the card shuffler.

61. (ORIGINAL) The automatic card shuffler of claim 60, and further comprising a movable cover that is closed at least part of the time over at least one of the card receiver and collection surface.

62. – 69 (CANCELLED)

70. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The device of claim 61 further wherein the randomizing system further comprises:

a card randomizing area, the card randomizing area including:

i) a gripping support mechanism for suspending at least one card within the card randomizing area; and

ii) a mechanism for automatically adjusting the gripping support mechanism during operation to suspend cards of varying dimensions.

71. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The device of claim 70, wherein the gripping support mechanism comprises a pair of spaced apart gripping pads that move towards the edges of a stack of cards.

72. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The device of claim 70 further comprising a sensor for sensing the presence of a substack of suspended cards.

73. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The device of claim 60 wherein there is a remote controller for controlling the card randomization system by means of a user-manipulated remote control device.

74. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The device of claim 73 wherein the remote controller is selected from the group consisting of an infra-red (I.R.) controller and a foot pedal.

75. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The device of claim 73 wherein the remote controller comprises an infra-red controller.

76. (NEW) An automatic card shuffler comprising:

- a housing having top portion substantially flush with a gaming table surface;
- the card receiver for accepting a group of cards to be shuffled;
- a randomizing system for randomizing the order of an initial set of playing cards beneath the top surface of the gaming table;
- a collection surface for receiving randomized cards;
- an elevator for raising the collection surface to an elevation wherein cards may be removed manually by a dealer; and
- a microprocessor for controlling the operation of the card shuffler.

77. (NEW) The shuffler of claim 76 wherein the cover is a flip-up cover.

78. (NEW) The shuffler of claim 76 wherein the cover is mechanically lifted by the shuffler.

79. (NEW) The shuffler of claim 76 wherein the cover overlays both the card receiver and the elevator.

80. (NEW) The shuffler of claim 76 wherein the housing substantially flush with the gaming table surface has a card receiver for accepting a group of cards to be shuffled that is recessed beneath the top surface of the gaming table.

81. (NEW) The shuffler of claim 76 wherein the housing substantially flush with the gaming table surface has a card collection surface for delivering randomized cards that is recessed beneath the top surface of the gaming table.

82. (NEW) The shuffler of claim 81 wherein there is a moveable cover over the collection surface allowing and preventing access to the collection surface when opened and closed, respectively.

83. (NEW) An automatic card shuffler associated with a gaming table comprising:
a housing positioned with respect to a gaming table surface such that a card receiver for accepting a group of cards to be shuffled is beneath the top surface of the gaming table;
the card receiver for accepting a group of cards to be shuffled;
a randomizing system for randomizing the order of an initial set of playing cards beneath the top surface of the gaming table;
a collection surface for receiving randomized cards;
an elevator for raising the collection surface to an elevation wherein cards are accessible to a dealer; and
a microprocessor for controlling the operation of the card shuffler.

84. (NEW) The shuffler of claim 83 wherein there is a moveable cover over the collection surface allowing and preventing access to the collection surface when opened and closed, respectively.

85. (NEW) The shuffler of claim 84 wherein the cover is a flip-up cover.
86. (NEW) The shuffler of claim 84 wherein the cover is mechanically lifted by the shuffler.
87. (NEW) The shuffler of claim 85 wherein the cover overlays both the card receiver and the elevator.
88. (NEW) The shuffler of claim 84 wherein access to the dealer comprises the ability to remove cards from the collection surface when the cover is opened.
89. (NEW) The shuffler of claim 84 wherein the cover allows some space for a tool top be inserted to assist in lifting the cover.
90. (NEW) The shuffler of claim 83 wherein card the card collection surface is within a card return area and both the card return area and an opening to the card receiver are approximately flush with the gaming table surface.
91. (NEW) The shuffler of claim 84 wherein card the card collection surface is within a card return area and both the card return area and an opening to the card receiver are approximately flush with the gaming table surface.